



TENNESSEE
AGRICULTURAL
STATISTICS
SERVICE

P.O. Box 41505
Nashville, TN 37204-1505
1-800-626-0987

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/tn>

cooperating with
Tennessee Department
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Debra K. Kenerson
State Statistician

nass-tn@nass.usda.gov

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Tennessee's Cotton and Corn Crops Better than Expected

Harvest of the State's row crops are virtually complete, with only some double-cropped soybeans currently left for the combines to run through. October proved to be excellent in terms of harvest weather. Debra Kenerson, new State Statistician for the Tennessee Agricultural Statistics Service commented, "Dry conditions throughout the month allowed producers to rapidly harvest their crops, but the dry weather has also been harsh on pastures and newly sown wheat fields." Weather also proved instrumental in limiting the yield potential of the State's soybean crop. Several freezes struck the crop the second week of October, effectively shutting the plants down. Kenerson went on to say, "Tennessee's cotton and corn crops, however, are shaping up to be better than initially thought." Based on a November 1 survey, the State's **corn** crop is forecast to yield 112 bushels per acre, ten bushels higher than last year and five bushels better than the five-year average yield. Yields still remain highly variable across the State. **Cotton** yields are also better than thought last month, now coming in at 606 pounds per acre, surpassing both the five and ten-year average yield. Tobacco forecasts did not change from October, with **burley** still projected at 2,100 pounds per acre. **E. Dark fire-cured** tobacco is forecast to yield 2,500 pounds per acre, while **W. Dark fire-cured** tobacco is forecast at 3,000 pounds. **Dark air-cured** also remains unchanged from last month at 2,200 pounds per acre. Tobacco producers have begun stripping their crop, preparing it for market. Due to the October freeze, the **soybean** crop has declined slightly with yield currently forecast at 26 bushels per acre.

Cotton Harvest More Than Three Weeks Ahead Of Normal

Harvest was in full steam for most of October, except for two or three days around the one big rain early in the month. Consequently, harvest was virtually completed by month's end, more than three weeks ahead of normal. For most producers a second picking was just not economically feasible, so stalk shredders followed the pickers. Although the hot, dry conditions of August took its toll on the crop, it appears that the Boll Weevil Eradication Program is having a positive affect on Tennessee's yields. Forecasted yields are now 606 pounds per acre, slightly better than average. Harvest acreage is estimated at 570,000 acres, up 1 percent from 1999. Production is forecast at 720,000 bales, the highest total since 1995.

Corn Yield 10 Bushels Better Than Last Year

October weather had little impact on Tennessee's corn crop, since harvest was virtually wrapped up the first week of the month. Producers still indicate highly variable yields, depending on whether or not rain was received during pollination. There were reports of brittle stalks causing some yield loss when combines came through the fields, but this was not a widespread problem. Corn growers now have a better handle on actual yields. The State's yield increased three bushels from last month to 112 bushels per acre, ten bushels better than last year. With an estimated 590,000 acres for grain, production totals 66.1 million bushels.

Late Frost Nips Soybean Potential

Mother Nature has had one more thing to say about Tennessee's soybean crop this year, as a freeze the second week of October shut down double-cropped beans. This, coupled with the hot dry conditions of August, has made for a difficult year coming off last year's drought. The crop is currently forecast to yield 26 bushels per acre, the second lowest yield since 1989, but seven bushels better than last year's disappointing crop. Total production is forecasted at 30.2 million bushels.

(Over)

Tobacco Producers Optimistic, Despite Poor Curing Conditions

The dry conditions throughout October has made stripping of the State’s tobacco crop difficult, since it has been in case so infrequently. Producers, however, remain optimistic due to better than average yields. Despite the dry conditions, growers have managed their crops well, as there have been only a few reports of tobacco curing improperly (remaining green). Timely rains and dry weather kept diseases in check this year. As producers prepare their crops for the market, burley yields are forecast at 2,100 pounds, topping the 2,000 pound mark for just the third time in the past decade. Production remains forecast at 94.5 million pounds, 9 percent below last year. Dark fire-cured tobacco yields were also unchanged from last month. Type 22 is forecast to yield 2,500 pounds and produce 19.8 million pounds, while Type 23 is forecast to yield a State record 3,000 pounds producing 1.89 million pounds. Dark air-cured tobacco, Type 35, is forecast to yield 2,200 pounds and produce 1.45 million pounds.

October Proves Rough For Pastures, Wheat

Fortunately for Tennessee cattle producers, we had an excellent year in terms of both hay yield and quality. Pasture conditions at the end of the month were 61 percent poor-to-very poor, as dry weather has taken it’s toll. Many producers have been forced to begin feeding hay. Cattle conditions remain mostly fair-to-good, but some producers have had to start hauling water. In addition, the lack of moisture has led to poor emergence of newly seeded wheat fields. Many producers are delaying sowing their wheat crop until adequate rain arrives. Through the first week of November, about two-thirds of the wheat crop had been seeded with about one-third of the crop emerged.

Crop Forecasts: Tennessee and United States, November 1, 2000, with Comparisons							
Crop	Unit	Harvested Acres		Yield Per Acre		Production	
			Indicated		Indicated		Indicated
		1999	2000	1999	2000	1999	2000
		Thousands		Number of Units		Thousands	
TENNESSEE							
Apples	lb.	—	---	—	—	9,500	9,000
Corn for grain	bu.	570	590	102	112	58,140	66,080
Cotton ¹	lb.	565	570	505	606	595	720
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	1,850	1,900	2.00	2.30	3,700	4,370
Peaches	lb.	—	—	—	—	3,100	2,000
Soybeans	bu.	1,200	1,160	19	26	22,800	30,160
Tobacco, All	lb.	63.2	54.2	1,941	2,170	122,601	117,592
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	7.0	7.9	2,280	2,500	15,960	19,750
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	.57	.63	2,500	3,000	1,425	1,890
Burley (31)	lb.	55.0	45.0	1,890	2,100	103,950	94,500
One-sucker (35)	lb.	.60	.66	2,110	2,200	1,266	1,452
Winter Wheat	bu.	340	380	56.0	55.0	19,040	20,900
UNITED STATES							
Apples	lb.	---	---	---	---	10,579,600	10,677,100
Corn for grain	bu.	70,537	73,099	133.8	137.7	9,437,337	10,053,942
Cotton ¹	lb.	13,424.9	13,519.0	607	622	16,968.0	17,509.8
Hay, All (excluding Alfalfa)	ton	39,175	38,274	1.92	1.90	75,153	72,680
Peaches	lb.	---	---	---	---	2,525,400	2,677,100
Soybeans	bu.	72,446	73,024	36.6	38.0	2,653,758	2,777,036
Tobacco, All	lb.	647.16	492.26	1,997	2,289	1,292,692	1,126,698
E. Dark-fired (22)	lb.	10.75	11.90	2,304	2,567	24,773	30,550
W. Dark-fired (23)	lb.	4.07	4.43	2,612	3,214	10,630	14,240
Burley (31)	lb.	303.60	201.00	1,829	2,073	555,185	416,677
One-sucker (35)	lb.	3.45	3.66	2,325	2,610	8,021	9,552
Winter Wheat	bu.	35,572	35,401	47.8	45.0	1,699,989	1,594,321

¹ Production in 480-lb. net weight bales. U.S. production includes American-Pima cotton.

REMINDER: All forecasts in this report are based on conditions about November 1.